

Top-20 status still a UK goal, Todd says

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LEXINGTON, KY. — Despite being “sideswiped” by a “perfect financial storm” over the past year, University of Kentucky President Lee Todd says that his institution remains committed to its state mandate to become a top-20 research institution.

“We take direct aim at top-20 status because it is a noble and ambitious cause and because the state really needs us to do so,” Todd said Thursday in his third State of the University address. “With the future of

the children and grandchildren of our commonwealth as our motivation, we move forward with renewed vigor and unwavering commitment to building a Kentucky that this state deserves.”

Todd also praised students, faculty and staff “for fighting for this university and this commonwealth like never before,” noting tough economic times have denied faculty and staff pay increases for two years in a row and left students and their families shouldering more educational expenses.

Todd cited several examples of student, faculty, staff and sports achievements in his speech to a

crowd that gathered at Patterson Plaza for his address, a free hot dog lunch, music and freebies handed out by student clubs.

Among the examples of success Todd noted were:

► 12,000 applications for the freshman class, a UK record.

► A freshman class that is more diverse than ever, with a 17 percent increase in black students, 21 percent increase in Hispanic students and a 38 percent increase in international students.

► UK research expenditures that hit a record \$337 million last year.

► A record number of

doctoral degrees awarded last spring.

Todd thanked Gov. Steve Beshear for sparing higher education from the last two rounds of budget cuts, but following his speech he said the state needs to find recurring sources of revenue, especially since federal stimulus dollars are due to run out in 2011.

Todd said the university needs money for salary increases and an additional research building. There is also a need to reduce class sizes and increase scholarships, Todd said.

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